(b) Efforts being made to boost tourism industry in the country include improvement of infrastructural facilities for tourism, development of tourist attractions, strengthening of publicity and promotional efforts, human resource development and encouraging private investment.

Service Term of Former CMD, ITDC

1650. SHRI GAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the news-item captioned "Two shortlisted for ITDC top post" appearing in Business Line, dated 23rd April, 1990;

(b) if so, the reasons for not awarding another service term to former Chairman and M.D., ITDC whose performance appraisal was well appreciated by the Ministry;

(c) whether Government are considering to appoint non-professionals and controversial officials of ITDC as named in the news report; and

(d) if answer to part (c) above be in the negative the reasons therefor and justification for not extending the term of former CMD of ITDC, till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) to (d) Yes Sir. The matter of awarding another term to former Chairman and Managing Director, ITDC is under examination in accordance with law and directions of the Delhi High Court.

Buddhist Pilgrims from Asian Countries

1651. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether a plan has been drawn up to increase the flow of Buddhist pilgrims from other Asian countries; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) and (b) The overseas marketing plan of the Department of Tourism, Govt. of India, gives due emphasis to tapping of the Buddhist pilgrim market segment from Asian countries by way of advertising of the Buddhist circuits in electronic and print media, familiarisation fam tours, brochures support, direct mailing and "Know India" seminars.

Inadequate Funding for Buddhist site

1652. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Buddhist sites in Visakhapatnam are hit by inadequate funding for proper conservation;

(b) if so, the reasons for neglecting the sites; and

(c) the steps proposed to safeguard the sites for tourists especially from Japan, China, Indonesia & Sri Lanka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) to (c) According to the information available from the State Government, there has not been any inadequacy of funds for the conservation of Kotturu and Sankaram. However, in the case of Bavikonda and Thotlakonda which are under the control of State Archaeology Department, the conservation/re-construction work was discontinued in 1994 due to paucity of funds. The State Government is taking steps to continue conservation and safeguard the sites for tourists.

Industrial Status to Tourism Sector

1653. PROF. RAM KAPSE:
SHRI RAMNATH KOVIND:
DR. RANBIR SINGH:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have under consideration a proposal to give industrial status to the tourism sector;